

PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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Contact Person

Stephen E. Ehlke
Assistant U.S. Attorney

Madison, Wisconsin -- Erik C. Peterson, United States Attorney for the Western District of Wisconsin, announced today that Assistant U.S. Attorney Stephen E. Ehlke has been appointed to serve as the District Election Officer for the Western District of Wisconsin, and in that capacity is responsible for overseeing the District's handling of complaints of election fraud and voting rights abuses in consultation with Justice Department headquarters.

On October 8, 2002, the U.S. Justice Department established a Ballot Access and Voting Integrity Initiative. The goals of this Initiative are to increase the Department's ability to deter election fraud and discrimination at the polls and to prosecute these offenses whenever and wherever they occur --- to make voting easier and cheating harder. Both goals are important. It is imperative that in pursuing voter integrity, ballot access is not in any way diminished or harmed. The Department's long-standing Election Day Program furthers the goals of the Initiative.

The Program also is intended to ensure public confidence in the integrity of the election process by providing local points of contact within the Department where the public can report possible election fraud and voting rights violations while the polls are

open on election day.

In order to respond to complaints of election fraud or voting rights abuses on November 7, 2006, and to ensure that such complaints are directed to the appropriate authorities, District Election Officer Ehlke will be on duty in this District while the polls are open. He can be reached by the public at the following telephone number: 608-264-5158.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation will also have Special Agents available to receive allegations of election fraud and other election abuses. The FBI can be reached by the public at 414-276-4684.

Complaints about ballot access problems or discrimination can be made directly to the Civil Rights Division's Voting Section in Washington at 1-800-253-3931 or 202-307-2767.

United States Attorney Peterson said, "The franchise is the cornerstone of American democracy. We all must ensure that those who are entitled to the franchise exercise it, while those who seek to corrupt it are brought to justice. Anyone who has information suggesting electoral corruption or voting rights abuses should make that information available immediately to the U.S. Attorney's Office, the FBI, or the Civil Rights Division."

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